WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image heating apparatus for heating an image formed on a recording material, comprising:

first rotatable member;

said first rotatable member contacting second rotatable member, wherein the recording material bearing the image passes through a nip portion formed at a position between said first rotatable member and said second rotatable member;

heating means for heating said first rotatable member, said heating means including a third rotatable member that is flexible and a temperature detecting element, wherein the third rotatable member contacts an outer peripheral surface of said first rotatable member with the third rotatable member, wherein the temperature detecting elements is provided in an area of an inside surface said third rotatable member, wherein said first rotatable member and said third rotatable member contacts in the area; and

control means for controlling said heating means based on detecting the temperature of said temperature detecting elements.

2. An image heating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said heating means has a heater provided inside of said third rotatable member and in

an area where said first rotatable member and said third rotatable member are in contact with each other.

3. An image heating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the temperature detecting element is provided upstream of said heater in the direction of the rotation of said third rotatable member.

4. An image heating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said temperature detecting element is provided downstream of said heater in the direction of the rotation of said third rotatable member.

5. An image heating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said third rotatable member is a resin film.

6. An image heating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said third rotatable member is a metallic film.

7. An image heating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls energization to said heating means so as to keep the temperature detected by said temperature detecting element at a set temperature, and the set temperature

is higher when the recording material passes through the nip portion than before it passes through the nip portion.